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## U.S. Department of Energy Says Mercury Control Technology Available, Costs Low

*HARRISBURG, Pa., April 18 /PRNewswire/* A U.S. Department of Energy official has acknowledged that technology to control mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants is readily available and "relatively inexpensive" -- as much as 50 times cheaper than equipment needed to control more traditional pollutants, such as sulfur dioxide.

Tom J. Feeley III, a technology manager at the department's National Energy Technology Laboratory, made the statements during an appearance on WPSU-TV's public affairs program, "Pennsylvania Inside Out," which aired April 14 in 29 central Pennsylvania counties.

Feeley's comments offer a stark contrast to utility industry officials' claims that mercury-specific control technology is cost prohibitive and not sufficiently demonstrated.

"The aggressive effort under way in the General Assembly to block Pennsylvania's state-specific mercury reduction rule is being steered by misinformation," Melody Zullinger, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs (PFSC), said. "The fact of the matter is that control technology is available and affordable."

PFSC, along with over 100 sportsmen's clubs, sent a letter to lawmakers last month indicating their support of Governor Edward G. Rendell's plan to reduce mercury emissions from Pennsylvania's coal-fired power plants, and urging them not to undermine the commonwealth's rulemaking process by

blocking the state plan to impose a federal rule, that will fail to clean up Pennsylvania's lakes and streams.

"Instead of aggressive efforts to put down the state-specific proposal, we need aggressive action to protect residents from this highly toxic pollutant," Zullinger said. "If legislators let science guide them, then the decision is easy: The federal approach is wrong for Pennsylvania."

Nearly 2.5 million sportsmen and women in Pennsylvania take part in the state's fish, wildlife, and outdoor recreation opportunities. Mercury pollution threatens Pennsylvania's \$1.6 billion recreational fishing industry. Accumulation of mercury in aquatic ecosystems has resulted in the commonwealth issuing fish consumption advisories for 80 waterways.

Pennsylvania is second only to Texas in terms of total mercury emissions.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection recently announced its plan for significantly cutting mercury emissions from coal plants by 2010, with an ultimate goal of controlling 90 percent of the mercury pollution from this source by 2015. Most importantly, DEP's action will require in-state reductions of mercury pollution -- unlike the federal mercury program that would allow Pennsylvania's dirtiest plants to avoid reducing mercury emissions by purchasing pollution credits from cleaner plants.

Among some of the points that Feeley made during his appearance on WPSU- TV:

\* **AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY:** "There is existing technology that has already proven to be able to take mercury out. There's a couple of ways you can do it. One is to inject small particles into the gas, and the mercury absorbs onto the particle. And like the filter in your home heater, the filter removes these carbon particles that have the mercury on them. ... The way the state is proposing under the state regulation is that power plants would put on these wet scrubbing devices. ... The scrubbers wash out the mercury ... "

\* **CO-BENEFITS OF SCRUBBERS:** "The scrubbers are designed to remove SO<sub>2</sub>. The side benefit is they also remove mercury. So some people look at that and say mercury (removal) is basically for free. You're paying for that scrubber to remove SO<sub>2</sub>, so the costs are associated with the SO<sub>2</sub> removal, the sulfur dioxide removal."

\* **COSTS OF ACTIVATED CARBON INJECTION:** "That technology is relatively inexpensive on a capital cost basis compared to a scrubber ... Again, that technology on a capital costs basis is maybe \$5 to \$7 a kilowatt. A scrubber is closer to \$250 a kilowatt."

\* **CONSUMER UTILITY COSTS:** "We don't anticipate -- just looking at some back of the envelope calculations that we've done -- that there would be a significant increase in electric utility rates."

The Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs is the statewide voice for the concerns of sportsmen

and conservationists, working to ensure that their rights and interests are protected and to protect and enhance the environment and our natural resources. Visit <http://www.pfsc.org/>. For additional background information about mercury, visit PFSC's Web site at: <http://www.pfsc.org/MercuryPage.html>.

Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs

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